Cities Matter:
Local Economic Development

Trainer’s Guide

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Contents

Overview

The "Cities Matter: Local Economic Development" Trainer's Guide is based on a course that took place in Budapest, Hungary, November 1–5, 1999. This course was directed by the International City/County Management Association and the U.S. Agency for International Development for 35 participants, primarily USAID project officers and their counterparts in Europe and Eurasia (E&E).

This trainer's guide is based on the goals and objectives that were established for that training course. The materials provided in this guide are meant to serve as the foundation for future courses. Future audiences may include USAID Mission staff and agencies working with them within a country or local government staff and others involved in economic development in one community or region. Presentations and activities will need to be adjusted to accommodate differences in goals, objectives, and parameters of specific training courses.

The "Cities Matter: Local Economic Development" course was conducted for people from several countries in the E&E region. As a result, the training was designed to accommodate differences among countries. The generic course materials provided here should be adapted and made specific to the country of participants. Where appropriate, trainers[1] should present relevant economic data, describe legislation or policies that may affect economic development activities, and use case studies or examples from the country in which the course is conducted.

It is recommended that anyone using the trainer's guide to plan or conduct a course read all course materials completely. The guide follows the course over five days; each day is divided into a morning and an afternoon session. (A compressed schedule adapted for a three-day course is also provided at the end of this section.) Session materials include:

- An overview, describing the purpose of the session
- Session objectives, which outline the main objectives
- Trainer's notes, giving step-by-step instructions about how the session might be presented
- Talking points, which give a brief overview of the presentation, to be expanded upon by the trainer
- Overheads, which the trainer should adapt or expand upon to accommodate the specific presentation to be made

[1] "Trainer" is used in this guide as a generic term for many types of training-related roles, including presenter, facilitator, and course designer. This guide uses the term "trainer" except when referring to a specialized role.

< Handouts (if applicable) to be photocopied and distributed; most give small groups instructions for an interactive activity.

All of these materials are meant as guidelines only and should be adapted to accommodate different course objectives or the needs of the group.

The Course Approach

The original "Cities Matter: Local Economic Development" course was designed as a five-day course, with an optional pre-course session designed to familiarize participants with the economic development terminology that would be used during the course.

As with any training course, there is a need to balance the desire to invite all interested parties with the need to limit the group size for optimal learning. Because adults learn best when they are actively engaged, the structure and approach of this course is highly participatory, making extensive use of small-group discussions and interaction. Thus, it is recommended that the group be limited to a maximum of 35 participants.

In addition, the original course required participants to complete a pre-course homework assignment. Participants were asked to gather information about authority and responsibility of local governments in the areas of fiscal autonomy, land use control and land ownership, infrastructure finance, municipal service provision, current employment labor conditions, and national laws related to tariffs and movement of goods and services. Requiring such pre-course work ensures that participants arrive at the first session with the background information they need to apply the content learned to the situation in their own countries.

Selecting Presenters and Facilitators

The trainer's notes, talking points, and overheads contained in this guide are designed to help presenters incorporate key learning ideas into their presentations. Trainer's notes are also designed to help presenters consider how to make their presentations lively and to engage the audience, but all presenters and facilitators should be familiar with and experienced in interactive learning techniques.

There are a number of things to consider when selecting presenters for a training course in local economic development. In addition to content knowledge, presenters should have good presentation skills, including the ability to connect with the audience, to "read" the audience's reactions, and to alter the presentation accordingly.

When considering presenters, look for balance among experts in theory (such as professors) and practitioners who are able to share real-life experiences. All presenters should be contacted well in advance of the course and given guidelines for session objectives, topics to be covered in the presentation, preparation of overheads or handouts, and key questions for discussion. If presenters plan to stay for the duration of the training course, encourage them to serve as resources for the group without distracting from presentations as they are taking place.

In addition to presenters, there should be at least one facilitator who is responsible for overseeing the progress of the training course. It is the facilitator's role to ensure that sessions run according to the course schedule. The facilitator may also step in to clarify key concepts, ask key questions, summarize sessions and/or connect one presentation to another, handle question-and-answer sessions, and encourage the group to move forward if it gets stuck. Good facilitators have excellent communication skills and knowledge of group dynamics.

Training Tips

It is important to tailor course materials to the knowledge and experience of participants. Data, examples, and anecdotes should be relevant to the audience.

In addition, the course should take into account the needs of adult learners. Take the following steps:

- Provide a comfortable learning environment.
- Discuss expectations at the outset of the training course and each session.
- Focus on practical skills and real-life examples.
- Provide ample opportunities for adults to integrate new ideas and concepts into their existing knowledge.
- Use interactive learning strategies. Long lectures can detract from learning.
- Accommodate different learning styles by using overheads, engaging participants in the discussion, recording their comments on flip charts, etc.

Learning Approaches

Because adults learn best when there are opportunities to participate in discussions and apply what they are learning to their own experiences, the "Cities Matter: Local Economic Development" course is designed to be highly interactive. Most sessions include a presentation followed by an interactive learning task that requires small groups of participants to apply the session content to their own countries or situations.

The training includes a variety of learning approaches, including the following:

Presentations. Presentations provide the content of the topics studied. They should go beyond a lecture, however, by engaging the audience and connecting the subject matter to the situations or experiences of the participants. (The trainer's notes offer suggested brainstorming activities or discussion questions to help accomplish this.) When planning presentations, trainers should look for other opportunities to help participants tie what they are learning into their real-world responsibilities. Presentations should also include overheads and examples to keep the participants engaged in the discussion.

Small-group exercises. The exercises are designed to facilitate the involvement of all participants as they apply the concepts learned to their own situation. The small-group exercises ask participants to complete a specific task and then to share their findings with the larger group.

Small groups typically work best when there are no more than six participants in each group. In the original course, participants were divided into groups with others from their country or region. When adapting the course, trainers should consider carefully what mix of individuals will work best for achieving their objectives. In some cases, it may be best to assign groups according to a common characteristic; for example, assigning all participants from the nonprofit sector in one group and those from the local government in another; breaking into groups so that people from the same community work together; or encouraging people with similar interests to join together. In other situations, it may be best to have diverse points of view in any given group. You may also want to consider allowing different participants to work together in different exercises; this encourages new relationships to be forged and ideas to be shared among participants.

It is important to provide clear instructions at the outset of the exercise about what the group is to accomplish. This is best achieved by providing a handout with instructions, reviewing the instructions verbally, and asking if there are any questions before the groups begin their work. Provide specific time limits and remind groups when they have only five (or ten) minutes to complete their task. In addition, ask groups to select a spokesperson who will be responsible for reporting on the group's discussion.

After small-group exercises, give each group time to report. Encourage groups to be brief. Respond following each group's presentation, asking questions for clarification or tying their discussion into past presentations. You may also ask others in the group to ask questions or add to what is mentioned.

After all groups have had a chance to report on their discussion, it is critical to summarize key ideas, focusing on what participants should take away from the presentation and/or exercise. Usually this is best done by asking the group what they learned from the discussion and/or how they will apply what they have learned. Where appropriate, answers may be posted on a flip chart. The trainer's notes are designed to help presenters make sure that key points are reinforced at the close of each presentation.

Field practicum. The fourth day of the original five-day training course was dedicated to a field practicum. However, a field practicum will not be included in training intended for a specific economic development program, since there is presumably no example to show. Three site visits were arranged to allow participants to examine the roles of the private sector, local government, and community groups. This session was scheduled for the fourth day of the course to ensure that the information gained could be incorporated into the overall learning experience of the course.

The sites visited should include places that have initiated a new process or program with visible and demonstrated results. Course designers should select communities that have taken considerable initiative on their own to improve their local economic condition, avoiding communities that initiated their program or project only as a result of funding from international donors. A second selection criterion is the degree to which there is true cooperation among the local government, private industry, and NGOs or other institutions. Look for local governments that have service delivery contracts with private or nongovernmental organizations, forums for ongoing communication between the private industry leaders and local government officials, the participation of all three sectors in the development of a strategy, and active involvement in regional economic development activities.

The mayor—or his or her office or designee—may serve as the main coordinator for the field practicum. This person should serve as a go-between for the course facilitator and the local community groups and make the arrangements. The objectives of the course and those of the field practicum as it relates to the course should be clearly presented to the mayor. A pre-visit to the community is advised so that questions can be answered and logistical arrangements can be made on site.

Do **not** try to convince an organization or community to participate. It is better to have a less advanced program described by people who want to tell the story than by a good program described by people who feel you are intruding. Leaders and staff who are knowledgeable about the process by which a new program was actually implemented, rather than people who can only describe the outcome, should present the program to the course participants.

Case studies. The “Cities Matter: Local Economic Development” course engaged speakers who had intimate knowledge of economic development activities in the E&E region to share their experiences. Because case studies were specific for this course, they have not been included in the trainer’s guide materials.

The purpose of case studies is to connect theory to practice. Case studies can be included as part of a presentation or as background materials. Good case studies are relevant to the content of the presentation and to the specific parameters in which the participants work. Case studies should be changed each time the course is delivered to ensure that they are both relevant and up-to-date. Choose case studies very carefully and do not include them if they are not relevant to a specific point being made in the course.

Finally, when using the case studies, make sure that the linkage between the session objectives and the case study is clearly made. Don't assume that participants can make the linkage by simply hearing the presentation.

Use the outline below to assist in preparing case studies of economic development activities.

I. Executive Summary

A. Brief statement of the problem
B. Typical or historic response to such conditions
C. New or different approach/practice used

II. Community Background and Conditions

A. Situation: Problem and/or issues that generated action
  - i. Economic conditions of community
  - ii. Institutions or people most affected by the conditions

B. Events that describe why community leadership took action
  - i. Personality/attitude of the leaders, organizations, institutions
  - ii. Political environment
  - iii. Civil society's awareness of the problem, issues, or proposed action

C. External factors that affected the actions taken
  - i. Intergovernmental relations
  - ii. International conditions
  - iii. Legislation and legal environment

III. Actions Taken To Resolve the Problem

A. Description of the innovation: project or process that resulted from the actions taken by the community, including a description of institutions (government, nongovernmental organizations [NGOs], private businesses)
  - i. History
  - ii. Autonomy and capacity to exercise authority
  - iii. Readiness to respond/participate in the action proposed

B. Resources required to achieve the innovation or action, including capital, people, land, information, skills, time, money, etc.

C. Outcome: What is different today from before you started

IV. Lessons Learned and Conclusions

A. Key factors that led to success
B. Problems or difficulties, particularly those that were unanticipated
C. Factors unique to the community

Reflections. At the end of each day, time is set aside for participants to reflect on the day's activities. During this time, you should encourage participants to make notes to themselves on concepts they would like clarified, key points that will assist them in their work, or concepts that they will ultimately incorporate into their strategic plan. This is a very informal session, lasting approximately one-half hour. Participants can leave at any time, once they feel they are ready to bring closure to the day.

Conducting Sessions

Training sessions need to be properly introduced, conducted, and processed. For learning to take place, trainers must effectively introduce the goals and objectives for each session, ask effective questions and guide group discussion, and provide closure at the end of each session. Trainers should take the following steps:

Prepare carefully. Prior to each session, review the reading assignment and the lesson outline, content, and activities. Try to anticipate questions and difficulties that participants are likely to have and review any areas that you are uncertain about. Plan carefully, but be flexible so that you can alter your plan to accommodate the needs of the group. Gather the materials and equipment you will need to conduct the lesson. A preparation checklist can help you make sure that you are ready.

Review objectives. In most cases, the session should begin with an overview of the session objectives and activities. Explain what you expect participants to learn from each activity and how the objectives fit into course goals (discussed later in this section). You can then solicit participation by asking group members about their experiences with the topic at hand.

Give clear directions. It is important to explain what is expected of participants for each activity. They need to know what they are to do, how they are to do it, and how much time they will be given. When breaking into small groups, allow time for participants to rearrange themselves and the furniture so that you have their full attention before giving directions. If you are working with printed materials, either read them together or allow participants sufficient time to read them on their own. Before beginning an activity, ask whether there are any questions. Remain available to clarify directions throughout the sessions.

Facilitate learning. As facilitator, your responsibilities include guiding the group process by keeping things moving, including all group members in the learning process, providing feedback, keeping participants directed toward the designated goal, and helping the group sum up each session. When conducting group activities, role plays, or simulations, don't be tempted to join as a participant. Maintaining your role as facilitator allows you to roam around the room to observe how participants are doing, refocus them on the task at hand, or offer suggestions. In some cases, particularly if the activity focuses on an aspect of communication or group dynamics, it may be useful for you to take notes about how the group is working to share with participants during the debriefing.

Process information. No matter how good the quality of the presentation or activity, it will be useless without processing the activity and the information learned in conducting it. Make sure you allow ample time for discussion after each activity. Use the flip chart to help record ideas and feedback. Remember, it is your responsibility to make sure participants relate the activity to the session objectives and to their own experiences and situations.

Provide closure. As you review key points, relate the learning back to the objectives you set. It is often helpful to ask for questions at the end of the session to make sure that there are no loose ends. Be prepared to suggest additional resources for those who would like to explore a topic in more depth.

Look for ways to encourage participants to convert what they have learned into action. Participants will benefit most if they jot down notes immediately after trying out a new skill or behavior. Use discussion questions and learning activities to inspire participants to reflect on their own situation, assess their strengths and weaknesses, and apply what they have learned. Reinforce skills by encouraging participants to try them out in real-life situations.

You can also encourage participants to use new skills by ending the class with questions such as:

< What is the first thing you'll do when you get back to the office to apply what you have learned here?

< What problems, if any, do you anticipate in applying on the job the skills you have learned?

Be enthusiastic! The trainer is a salesperson of ideas and a role model for the rest of the class members. Enthusiasm fosters a positive learning environment. Your positive (or negative) attitude may quickly become the prevailing mood of the group.

Goals and Objectives

Planning always begins with where you want to end up. Course goals and objectives should be based on the general need that prompted the training session in the first place. But they should go beyond this providing specific insight into desired outcomes. Consider the following questions:

- Why are we having the course or session? What do we hope to accomplish?
- What do we want participants to know when they leave the session?
- What do we want participants to do with the information they have learned?

Course Goals. The purpose of the “Cities Matter: Local Economic Development” course is to demonstrate how to develop an enabling environment that will permit local government, business, and nongovernmental entities to build long-term, sustainable economic development and growth.

Course Objectives. Participants will be able to:

- Describe elements of the legal, intergovernmental, political, and administrative framework that facilitate economic development and growth.
- Develop a governing framework from which to analyze relationships between private enterprise and local government that allows for formation of appropriate intervention policies.
- Identify actions municipal government should take that will encourage both private business investment and public and private capital for public infrastructure improvements.
- Describe how to analyze the value of community assets and financial incentive programs, and target them to gain maximum benefit for the community overall.
- Establish the fundamental elements of a comprehensive local government economic development program for their respective countries.

In addition to these overall goals and objectives, each session has specific learning objectives. These are presented at the beginning of each session’s materials. Trainers should review these objectives carefully, revise them according to the needs of the audience and course, and ensure that the session adequately addresses the new objectives.

Sessions

For the purposes of this trainer’s guide, the course is divided into 10 sessions. The sessions are numbered so that they are more easily moved to another day or adapted for a shorter training course. The sessions provided in this trainer’s guide are as follows:

Session 1: The Principles and Practice of Economic Development (Day 1 morning)
Session 2: The Role of Local Government in the Global Economy (Day 1 afternoon)
Session 3: Attracting Private Investment (Day 2 morning)
Session 4: Revenue Raising and Municipal Credit for Infrastructure Investment (Day 2 afternoon)
Session 5: Maximizing the Value of Local Government Assets and Incentive Programs (Day 3 morning)
Session 6: Developing the Local Labor Force (Day 3 afternoon)
Session 7: Field Practicum: Local Government Sector, Private Sector, NGO Sector (Day 4 all day)
Session 8: Economic Development Policy and Organizations (Day 5 morning)
Session 9: Building an Economic Development Strategy (Day 5 afternoon)

Each session includes an overview and objectives. Before conducting the session, read these carefully and adapt them according to the needs of your audience and the goals of your course. In some cases, you may need to adjust the materials to accommodate a specialty within the group or to incorporate information that is not covered.

Like the objectives, the trainer's notes are also meant to be a guide, not a prescription of how the session should be presented. In particular, the timing may vary considerably from one group to another—depending not only on the expertise of the group, but also on the nature of the group discussion, the number and quality of the examples that are incorporated into the discussion, and other characteristics of the presenter. All presenters should consider the talking points and overheads as just the skeleton of the presentation, however, adding examples that are relevant to the country in which the training is held and the audience that is present. It is strongly recommended that presenters practice their presentations ahead of time and make adjustments to the recommended timing according to their specific presentations rather than attempting to fit their presentation into the timing provided in this manual.

Sample Five-Day Course Schedule

The following schedule assumes a five-day training course with similar goals and objectives to the initial course. The schedule should be adapted to meet new goals or time frames.

Day 1: E&E's Emphasis on Local Economic Development

8:30 Welcome and Opening Remarks
Course Objectives
The Principles and Practice of Economic Development

10:30 Group Assignment: Developing the Framework for Local Economic Development

LUNCH

1:00 The Role of Local Government in the Global Economy
Case Studies

5:00 Reflections and Adjournment

Day 2: Strengthening the Investment Environment Through Administrative Practices

8:30 Welcome and Overview
Attracting Private Investment

10:30 Group Assignment: Identifying the Barriers to an Investment Environment

LUNCH

1:00 Revenue Raising and Municipal Credit for Infrastructure Investment

2:30 Group Assignment: Evaluating Revenue-Generating Options

5:00 Reflections and Adjournment

Day 3: Enhancing Resources for Economic Development

8:30 Welcome and Overview
Maximizing the Value of Local Government Assets and
Incentive Programs

10:30 Group Assignment: Applying the Principles: Local Government Assets and Incentive Programs

LUNCH

1:00 Developing the Local Labor Force
Case Study: Creating a Local Labor Force Enhancement Program

3:00 Group Assignment: Developing the Framework for a Labor Force Analytical Tool

5:00 Reflections and Adjournment

Day 4: Field Practicum

9:00 Welcome and Overview
PANEL DISCUSSIONS:
- Panel 1: Local Government Sector
- Panel 2: Private Sector
- Panel 3: NGO Sector

LUNCH

1:00 SITE VISITS

4:00 Small-Group Discussions

5:00 Reflections and Adjournment

Day 5: Organizational Structures for Effective Local Economic Development

8:30 Welcome and Overview
Economic Development Policy and Organizations

LUNCH

1:00 Group Assignment: Building an Economic Development Strategy

4:00 Course Evaluation and Closing

Sample Three-Day Course Schedule

Because officials and managers often cannot get away from the office for five full days, trainers may need to consider offering a shorter course. The following suggested agenda for a three-day course may be well suited for most local economic development audiences. This agenda follows the five-day schedule until the afternoon of Day 3, when the session on national and local policy is replaced with the session on developing a strategy. Trainers may want to consider other ways to provide course participants with information about the sessions omitted from the five-day course, perhaps as background readings, for example.

Day 1: E&E's Emphasis on Local Economic Development

8:30 Welcome and Opening Remarks
Course Objectives
The Principles and Practice of Economic Development

10:30 Group Assignment: Developing the Framework for Local Economic Development

LUNCH

1:00 The Role of Local Government in the Global Economy
Case Studies

5:00 Reflections and Adjournment

Day 2: Strengthening the Investment Environment Through Administrative Practices

8:30 Welcome and Overview
Attracting Private Investment

10:30 Group Assignment: Identifying the Barriers to an Investment Environment

LUNCH

1:00 Revenue Raising and Municipal Credit for Infrastructure Investment

2:30 Group Assignment: Evaluating Revenue-Generating Options

5:00 Reflections and Adjournment

Day 3: Enhancing Resources for Economic Development

8:30 Welcome and Overview
Maximizing the Value of Local Government Assets and Incentive Programs

10:30 Group Assignment: Applying the Principles: Local Government Assets and Incentive Programs

LUNCH

1:00 Group Assignment: Building an Economic Development Strategy

4:00 Course Evaluation and Closing

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